

These cleanups are pivotal to comprehensive economic revitalization efforts like the one many of us in the Pennsylvania delegation are looking at for Allegheny County and for the Mon Valley region in particular.

We have a good program here, and Congress in its wisdom found a sound funding mechanism for it. Let us demonstrate our good faith to small businesses in this sector and move this legislation forward without delay.

Last year, the Congress passed this legislation, but the Senate failed to act on it before adjournment last October. Since this year's version is identical to the previously approved bill, I expect the House will act expeditiously to pass the LUST Amendments Act. Hopefully, this will give the Senate ample time to send this legislation to the President for his approval.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in support of H.R. 688, the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Amendments Act. As an original cosponsor of the legislation, this Member would like to commend the distinguished gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, and the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, Mr. STUPAK, for introducing this bill and working for its enactment.

Across the Nation, leaking underground storage tanks present a hazard which must be addressed. Unfortunately, less than half of the identified leaking tanks have been remedied. In addition, there are likely thousands of other unidentified leaking tanks which require action.

This legislation improves the current situation by distributing more money from the existing trust fund to the States where it belongs. The trust fund was established by Congress in 1986 and currently contains about \$1 billion. Although the trust fund is intended to provide assistance in the cleanup of underground storage tanks, too much of the money in the trust fund has been used to offset general Federal spending.

This Member certainly believes that the money in the trust fund should be used for the purposes for which it was originally intended; money simply accumulating in the trust fund obviously does not address the current needs. The large number of remaining leaking underground storage tank sites is evidence that the States could use this money which is currently accumulating in the trust fund. This bill would assist States in more efficiently receiving and disbursing money from the trust fund. It would also give the States increased flexibility in the use of money from the trust fund.

This Member urges his colleagues to support H.R. 688.

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Commerce Committee's Finance and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, I rise in support of H.R. 688, the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Act, commonly referred to as the LUST program.

My colleague, Mr. SCHAEFER, has developed a well-crafted piece of legislation which has two primary purposes. The first is to ensure that 85 percent of the money Congress appropriates for the program goes to the States; and to expand the uses for which the trust fund moneys can be used.

In 1986, Congress created the LUST Trust Fund, paid for with a one-tenth of one cent per

gallon tax on motor fuels. The Trust Fund is to be used by the EPA or the States, in accordance with Federal law, to enforce Underground Storage Tank corrective action requirements; to conduct cleanups where no solvent responsible party can be found, where there is a known but unwilling responsible party, or where a responsible party does not have the financial ability to pay for the entire cleanup.

Unlike many other well-intentioned bills enacted by Congress, which then fall victim to the law of unintended consequences, the LUST program has met its intended purpose to set leak detection and prevention standards for underground tanks.

H.R. 688 improves on the current program because it provides an increased amount of stability and certainty to State agencies while granting greater flexibility.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 688.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado, Mr. DAN SCHAEFER, once again for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. OXLEY] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 688, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 688.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1271, FAA RESEARCH, ENGINEERING, AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. MCINNIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-70) on the resolution (H. Res. 125) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1271) to authorize the Federal Aviation Administration's research, engineering, and development programs for fiscal years 1998 through 2000, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1273, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. MCINNIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-71) on the resolution (H. Res. 126) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1273) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the National Science Foundation, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1274, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. MCINNIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-72) on the resolution (H. Res. 127) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1274) to authorize appropriations for the National Institute of Standards and Technology for fiscal years 1998 and 1999, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1275, CIVILIAN SPACE AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 1998 AND 1999

Mr. MCINNIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-73) on the resolution (H. Res. 128) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1275) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for fiscal years 1998 and 1999, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

FIRE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1272) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1272

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fire Administration Authorization Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 17(g)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2216(g)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking "and" at the end of subparagraph (E);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (F) and inserting in lieu thereof a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(G) \$29,600,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998; and

“(H) \$30,500,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999.”

SEC. 3. SUCCESSOR FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 is amended—

(1) in section 29(a)(1), by inserting “, or any successor standard thereto,” after “Association Standard 74”;

(2) in section 29(a)(2), by inserting “or any successor standards thereto,” after “which-ever is appropriate,”;

(3) in section 29(b)(2), by inserting “, or any successor standards thereto” after “Association Standard 13 or 13-R”;

(4) in section 31(c)(2)(B)(i), by inserting “or any successor standard thereto,” after “Life Safety Code,”; and

(5) in section 31(c)(2)(B)(ii), by inserting “or any successor standard thereto,” after “Association Standard 101.”

SEC. 4. TERMINATION OR PRIVATIZATION OF FUNCTIONS.

The Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall transmit to Congress a report providing notice at least 60 days in advance of the termination or transfer to a private sector entity of any significant function of the United States Fire Administration.

SEC. 5. LIMITATIONS.

(a) PROHIBITION OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES.—None of the funds authorized by the amendments made by this Act shall be available for any activity whose purpose is to influence legislation pending before the Congress, except that this subsection shall not prevent officers or employees of the United States or of its departments or agencies from communicating to Members of Congress on the request of any Member or to Congress, through the proper channels, requests for legislation or appropriations which they deem necessary for the efficient conduct of the public business.

(b) LIMITATION ON APPROPRIATIONS.—No sums are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the activities for which sums are authorized by the amendments made by this Act, unless such sums are specifically authorized to be appropriated by the amendments made by this Act.

(c) ELIGIBILITY FOR AWARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall exclude from consideration for grant agreements made by the Administration after fiscal year 1997 any person who received funds, other than those described in paragraph (2), appropriated for a fiscal year after fiscal year 1997, under a grant agreement from any Federal funding source for a project that was not subjected to a competitive, merit-based award process. Any exclusion from consideration pursuant to this subsection shall be effective for a period of 5 years after the person receives such Federal funds.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the receipt of Federal funds by a person due to the membership of that person in a class specified by law for which assistance is awarded to members of the class according to a formula provided by law.

(3) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “grant agreement” means a legal instrument whose principal purpose is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, and does not include the acquisition (by purchase, lease, or barter) of property or services for the direct benefit or

use of the United States Government. Such term does not include a cooperative agreement (as such term is used in section 6305 of title 31, United States Code) or a cooperative research and development agreement (as such term is defined in section 12(d)(1) of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a(d)(1))).

SEC. 6. NOTICE.

(a) NOTICE OF REPROGRAMMING.—If any funds authorized by the amendments made by this Act are subject to a reprogramming action that requires notice to be provided to the Appropriations Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, notice of such action shall concurrently be provided to the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(b) NOTICE OF REORGANIZATION.—The Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall provide notice to the Committees on Science and Appropriations of the House of Representatives, and the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Appropriations of the Senate, not later than 15 days before any major reorganization of any program, project, or activity of the United States Fire Administration.

SEC. 7. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE YEAR 2000 PROBLEM.

With the year 2000 fast approaching, it is the sense of Congress that the United States Fire Administration should—

(1) give high priority to correcting all 2-digit date-related problems in its computer systems to ensure that those systems continue to operate effectively in the year 2000 and beyond;

(2) access immediately the extent of the risk to the operations of the United States Fire Administration posed by the problems referred to in paragraph (1), and plan and budget for achieving Year 2000 compliance for all of its mission-critical systems; and

(3) develop contingency plans for those systems that the United States Fire Administration is unable to correct in time.

SEC. 8. BUY AMERICAN.

(a) COMPLIANCE WITH BUY AMERICAN ACT.—No funds appropriated pursuant to the amendments made by this Act may be expended by an entity unless the entity agrees that in expending the assistance the entity will comply with sections 2 through 4 of the Act of March 3, 1933 (41 U.S.C. 10a-10c, popularly known as the “Buy American Act”).

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—In the case of any equipment or products that may be authorized to be purchased with financial assistance provided under the amendments made by this Act, it is the sense of Congress that entities receiving such assistance should, in expending the assistance, purchase only American-made equipment and products.

(c) NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS OF ASSISTANCE.—In providing financial assistance under the amendments made by this Act, the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration shall provide to each recipient of the assistance a notice describing the statement made in subsection (a) by the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] and the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER].

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Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. SENSENBRENNER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1272, the Fire Administration Authorization Act of 1977.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, as amended, was reported favorably by voice vote with overwhelming bipartisan support by the Committee on Science on April 16, 1997.

H.R. 1272 reauthorizes the programs and activities of the U.S. Fire Administration, a small but important Federal agency within the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The USFA was created by Congress in 1974 in response to a report by the President's National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, entitled “America Burning,” which presented a dismal assessment of the Nation's fire problem. The report found that nearly 12,000 lives were lost to fire yearly in this country. In addition, fire was found to be responsible for more than 300,000 injuries and over \$3 million in economic losses.

Congress reacted to the report by declaring a Federal role for reducing fire losses and created the USFA and the National Fire Academy. The USFA is currently charged with helping prevent and control fire-related losses through, first, coordination of the Nation's fire safety and emergency medical service activities; second, educating the public on fire prevention and control; third, collecting, analyzing and disseminating data related to fire; fourth, promoting the use of sprinkler systems in residential and commercial buildings; fifth, conducting research and development on fire suppression; sixth, promoting fire fighter health and safety; and seventh, coordinating with other agencies charged with emergency response responsibilities.

The USFA administers the National Fire Academy. The academy provides management-level training and education to fire and emergency service personnel and fire protection and control activities. The Fire Academy, located in Emmitsburg, MD, trains tens of thousands of fire and emergency personnel a year through its on and off campus programs.

Year after year during budget hearings held by the committee, witnesses from the volunteer and paid fire services, as well as emergency services, have testified to the important and indispensable role the USFA and NFA pay and their ability to perform their responsibilities. For a modest Federal expenditure, the USFA leverages the resources of tens of thousands of fire departments nationwide. The USFA provides training and education to firefighters, provides them with data which enables them to fight fires more efficiently and safely, and performs research on lifesaving protective clothing and gear as well as new fire suppression technologies. All of these activities could not be done as well, if at

all, if the tight budgets of volunteer fire departments, without whom the Nation would be incapable of protecting lives and property without an enormous expenditure of money, money which I will hasten to say would be raised through local property taxes.

H.R. 1272 authorizes \$29.6 million in fiscal year 1998 and \$34.5 million in fiscal year 1999, a 3 percent annual increase over the administration's request of \$28.7 million. The USFA needs the slight increase because the agency recently acquired a new mission.

The USFA's new mission, counter terrorism training for emergency response personnel, arose from the enactment of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act passed last year by the Congress and signed by the President. Counter terrorism training for first responders is an appropriate function for the USFA as it is frequently local fire and emergency departments who are first on the scene not only to battle fires, but also to react to acts of terrorism such as the bombings in Oklahoma City and the World Trade Center in New York. In fact, counter terrorism training complements and supplements many of the traditional first responder training programs currently offered through the National Fire Academy.

Following enactment of the Antiterrorism Act, money was appropriated to FEMA and the USFA in the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1997 to begin counter terrorism training this year. The USFA's fiscal 1998 budget request includes for the first time an appropriation for this activity, without a corresponding increase in the overall budget request. During the committee's budget hearing on USFA, the administrator explained that request reflects the incorporation of counter terrorism training as a new, permanent mission of the agency and that the arson budget would be decreased in order to fund this mission.

As I have stated before, counter terrorism training is relevant and appropriately performed within the USFA. However, the Committee on Science feels that a slight increase in the budget is necessary in order to accommodate the new mission, while ensuring that the agency's core missions, including arson, are not negatively impacted.

The other sections of H.R. 1272 include: first, technical changes to the fire protection standards; second, a provision requiring that the administrator inform Congress in advance of any effort to privatize or terminate agency activities; third, a prohibition of funds authorized by this act for congressional lobbying; fourth, a limitation on unauthorized appropriations; fifth, a 5-year limitation on future grants to a person who received non-competitive, merit-reviewed awards; sixth, a requirement that reprogramming notices be required by the Appropriations Committees must be provided to the authorizing committees; and sev-

enth, a sense of Congress resolution emphasizing that planning should begin immediately to assess and correct any computer systems affected by the year 2000 date-related software problem and requires the USFA to comply with the Buy American Act.

I understand that there is some confusion among Members about this bill based upon erroneous information that many offices received regarding the bill's authorization levels compared with fiscal year 1997 spending. The original appropriation to USFA for fiscal 1997 was \$27.6 million. However, late last year Congress appropriated an additional \$2.5 million to USFA for a new mission in counter terrorism training, which raised the spending level to 30.1 million in fiscal year 1997. This was in response to a supplemental request by the administration for funds authorized in the antiterrorism and effective death penalty act of 1996.

Let me be clear that the authorization levels in this bill of 29.6 million for fiscal 1998 and \$30.5 million for fiscal 1999 are lower than the fiscal 1997 appropriated final level of \$30.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I wish to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF], and the ranking minority member, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA], of the Subcommittee on Basic Research of the Committee on Science for their hard work on this legislation as well as the full committee's ranking member, the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN]. I urge the Houses's support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1272, the Fire Administration Authorization Act of 1997. I want to commend the gentleman from New Mexico [Mr. SCHIFF], the chairman of the Subcommittee on Basic Research, for his efforts to develop this legislation. I also want to especially acknowledge the leadership of the chairman of the Committee on Science, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] and the ranking Democratic member, the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN] for bringing the bill before the House so expeditiously.

The U.S. Fire Administration is a small Federal agency with a disproportionate impact. Its programs make a difference by improving the skills of firefighters and other emergency rescue workers in all parts of the Nation, improving the tools available to detect and subdue fires and by raising public awareness of fire prevention measures. Although the Federal expenditure for the agency is small, its impact on the well-being of all Americans is enormous.

The Fire Administration was created by the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 in response to a growing awareness that the high loss of

life and destruction of property due to fire was a national problem which could be improved by focused and coordinated education, training and research efforts. During the past 25 years, significant progress has been made through the programs of the Fire Administration which increases public awareness of fire safety measures, improves the effectiveness of fire and emergency services and spurs the wider use of home fire safety devices. Nevertheless the United States still has one of the highest fire death rates among advanced nations.

While much has been accomplished by the Fire Administration, the record of fire death rates and property loss in our Nation reveals that much remains to be done. H.R. 1272 authorizes funding for the Fire Administration above the President's request for fiscal year 1998 and provides sufficient growth to offset inflation for fiscal year 1999.

On the basis of testimony to the Science Committee, the Fire Administration operates effective programs that are widely acclaimed by firefighters and emergency response personnel alike. H.R. 1272 provides the slight growth needed to allow the agency to sustain its new and ongoing programs and continue to successfully carry out its multiple missions.

In particular, the increase above the fiscal year 1998 request is for the purpose of providing sufficient resources to allow the Fire Administration to continue its important new education and training programs for counter terrorism, which have been expressed so eloquently by the chair of the Science Committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] in his remarks.

With our world becoming no less dangerous, it is vital that the first responders to emergencies in every community are well-trained and ready to deal with terrorist actions. In giving the Fire Administration this important, new responsibility, it is essential to also provide sufficient resources to ensure that the agency's traditional functions involving firefighter training and public fire education do not suffer. H.R. 1272 provides the modest growth that will prevent such an adverse impact on the agency.

The Fire Administration has long enjoyed the bipartisan support of Congress because of the recognition of its vital mission to increase public safety. I would like to commend the majority members of the Science Committee for working in a bipartisan fashion with the minority to develop H.R. 1272.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1272 is a good bill which authorizes the programs of an agency that truly contributes to the well-being of all of our citizens; and I am pleased to recommend the measure to my colleagues for their approval.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON LEE].

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member

for yielding me the time, and I thank very much the chairman and the ranking member for this bipartisan effort on behalf of the Fire Administration Authorization Act.

If there was a pleasurable act in the House Science Committee, certainly, being able to support this agency and all that it does was that. I would also like to stand today to salute all of the Nation's firefighters and emergency staff across the Nation, for it is through their sacrifice and effort that we are, in fact, a safer country.

In 1974, Congress created the U.S. Fire Administration and its National Fire Academy in order to halt the tragic loss of firefighters and individuals in the United States. Training, research, and public education have accounted for the success of the U.S. Fire Administration's commitment to reduce the loss of life.

There is no doubt that the people of America in our communities are safer as a result of the USFA. Every man, woman, and child in America benefits from its efforts, as do the Nation's 1.2 million fire servers, emergency medical servers, and emergency response personnel.

Emergencies will continue to occur. How we react to emergencies depends on the readiness of those that are dispatched to respond to our most critical emergency situations. We must be prepared to handle the critical situations that inevitably will arise.

The United States does have one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world. We are obviously working hard to bring that number down. More Americans die in fires each year than in all the natural disasters combined. With this agency, however, we feel comfortable that we are working steadfastly to stem that tide.

For example, approximately 4,500 deaths and 30,000 civilian injuries occur annually. Eighty percent of all civilian deaths occur in the home. Approximately 2 million fires are reported each year, with the direct property loss of about \$8.5 billion per year, with the cost to taxpayers of about \$50 billion a year.

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One of the missions of the USFA is leadership coordination and support for the Nation's fire prevention and control, fire training and education and emergency medical services activities. This mission is carried out through programs directed at reducing injuries and loss of life and property resulting from fire.

Certainly our heart goes out to those citizens in North Dakota suffering from the flood and then the absolute irony of seeing their buildings burned down. Certainly this is an aspect of firefighting that many of us never thought we would have to confront, but this agency has the ability to try and solve those particular problems.

The USFA promotes firefighter health and safety and initiates re-

search into and conducts special studies to improve fire prevention and protection. USFA's national fire incidents reporting system collects, analyzes and disseminates data to assist State and local governments in reducing fire losses.

In NFA classrooms there are individuals who are trained to save lives, not only from terrorist attacks, but also from natural disasters and hazardous materials disasters.

It is important to know exactly what we are funding. Particularly, the activities of the National Fire Academy and those courses include training individuals on command and control of fire department operations in multialarm incidences, something very important for our urban areas and even in our smaller communities. It also assists, if you will, in fighting the overall world threat of terrorism. Terrorism is a worldwide threat that waits until the most vulnerable moment to shatter the lives and dreams of families and individuals. One terrorist attack affects hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals. The ability to swiftly mitigate the damages of terrorism must be firmly and solidly in place. We do not know where the next terrorist attack will take place, but fire departments across this country must be ready and able to respond if called upon.

The National Fire Academy trains students from all across the United States. I am very proud that in Houston a total of 29 firefighting students attended classes at the Emergency Management Institute and the National Fire Academy during the fiscal year 1996. The United States must have as its priority to bring down the terrible loss of life and property damage as it relates to fire. This supportive legislation will help us do that in the years to come.

Again, I am gratified for the bipartisan effort. My thanks to the chairperson and ranking member.

Finally, we must remember we do not know where the next fire emergency will occur, but we must be prepared to combat it and handle it effectively. The efforts of the U.S. Fire Administration allows us to accomplish this task. I rise in support of this legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1974, Congress created the U.S. Fire Administration [USFA] and its National Fire Academy [NFA] in order to halt the tragic loss of firefighters and individuals in the United States. Training, research, and public education have accounted for the success of the U.S. Fire Administration's commitment to reduce the loss of life.

There is no doubt that the people of America and our communities are safer as a result of the USFA. Every man, woman, and child in America benefits from its efforts, as do the Nation's 1.2 million fire service, emergency medical service, and emergency response personnel.

Emergencies will continue to occur. How we react to emergencies depends on the readiness of those who are dispatched to respond

to our most critical emergency situations. We must be prepared to handle the critical situations that inevitably arise.

The United States has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world. According to the USFA, more Americans die in fires each year than in all the natural disasters combined.

Approximately 4,500 deaths and 30,000 civilian injuries occur annually. Eighty percent of all civilian deaths occur in the home. Approximately 2 million fires are reported each year with a direct property loss of about \$8.5 billion per year with a cost to taxpayers of about \$50 billion per year.

According to the USFA, its mission is to provide leadership, coordination, and support for the Nation's fire prevention and control, fire training and education, and emergency medical services activities. The mission is carried out through programs directed at reducing injuries and loss of life and property resulting from fire.

The USFA also is responsible for the development and delivery of training programs to advance the professionalism of the fire service and allied personnel. USFA assists State and local governmental efforts to prevent and control fire-related incidents, arson, and enhance the capability of the fire service to material incidents.

The USFA promotes firefighter health and safety and initiates research into and conducts special studies to improve fire prevention and protection. USFA's national fire incidents reporting system [NFIRS] collects, analyzes, and disseminates data to assist State and local governments in reducing fire losses.

The National Emergency Training Center [NETC] in Emmitsburg, MD, is a 107-acre campus which is shared by the Emergency Management Institute [EMI], the National Fire Academy, and the U.S. Fire Administration.

Through the courses and programs of the National Fire Academy, it works to enhance the ability of the fire service and allied professionals to deal more effectively with fire and related emergencies. The Fire Academy trains approximately 4,000 students through resident courses. An additional 3,500 students attend State weekend programs which offer shorter, more intense courses on designated weekends set aside for specific States.

More than 500 students attended regional delivery courses annually, and off campus direct delivery courses reach 7,000 participants.

According to the National Fire Academy, its delivery system is diverse. Teaching facilities include modern classrooms, residence halls, and training facilities.

In NFA classrooms are individuals who are trained to save lives; not only from terrorists attacks, but also from natural disasters and hazardous materials disasters.

It is important to know exactly what we are funding. National Fire Academy courses provide resident training in incident command and include:

Command and control of fire department operations in multi-alarm incidents;

Command and control of fire department operations at natural and manmade disasters, which addresses fire and rescue department operations at natural and manmade disasters that may require interagency or interjurisdictional coordination. Earthquakes, hurricanes, blizzards, civil disturbances, terrorism, hazardous materials releases, tornadoes, and floods are a few of the topics that are covered;

Command and control of fire department operations at target hazards, which is designed to introduce command officers to the complexities involved in commanding incidents at high risk areas;

Incident command system for emergency medical services, where students use scenarios, case studies, graphics, audiovisual, and role playing in order to demonstrate an understanding of the concept;

Basic life support and hazardous materials response, which emphasize critical concerns for emergency medical responders at hazardous materials incidents;

Initial response to hazardous materials incidents: basic concepts which gives students an understanding of the basic concepts and techniques of hazardous materials first response;

Fire service communication, which focuses on verbal and written communication skills for fire service managers;

Terrorism is a worldwide threat that waits until the most vulnerable moment to shatter the lives and dreams of families and individuals. One terrorist attack effects hundreds if not thousands of individuals. The ability to swiftly mitigate the damages of terrorism must be firmly and solidly in place.

We do not know where the next terrorist attack will take place. But fire departments across this country must be ready and able to respond if called upon. Fire response teams in Texas must be as quickly able to rapidly combat terrorist attacks as fire response teams in New York. Each must possess the same cutting edge training that will allow them to protect the lives and property of the American people.

The National Fire Academy trains students from all across the United States. In Houston, a total of 29 firefighting students attended classes at the Emergency Management Institute and the National Fire Academy during fiscal year 1996.

The priorities of the U.S. Fire Administration include public education and fire safety in order to reduce fire deaths, injuries, and property losses; assist State and local government efforts to prevent and control for related incidents, especially arson; and develop programs to encourage State and local fire and EMS service delivery organizations to coordinate and cooperate with State and local emergency management agencies.

The USFA also participates in research and technology initiatives to enhance the capability of the fire service to respond to all types of emergencies, including emergency medical and hazardous materials incidents; to promote the health, safety, and efficiency of firefighters; and to initiate research and evaluation procedures to improve fire prevention and protection.

We do not know where the next fire emergency will occur. But we must be prepared to combat it and handle it effectively. The efforts of the U.S. Fire Administration allows us to accomplish this task.

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to just briefly thank the gen-

tleman from Michigan [Mr. BARCIA], and the gentleman from California [Mr. BROWN], and all of the members of the Committee on Science for working hard to expedite in a bipartisan manner this very important bill.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1272, the Fire Administration Authorization Act of 1997. This important legislation is the product of a truly bipartisan effort to adequately fund a small Federal agency whose impact can be felt nationwide, every day.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Fire Administration [USFA] was created in 1974 in order to help reverse a very disconcerting trend of increasing deaths, injuries, and property damage caused by fires. Since its establishment, the USFA has assisted our nation's first responders in reducing fire losses. The USFA, charged with coordinating the nation's fire fighting efforts, funds programs in public education in fire prevention and control, firefighter health and safety, research and technology, and data gathering and analysis. In addition, the USFA administers the National Fire Academy [NFA] in Emmitsburg, MD through which tens of thousands of firefighters annually receive management level education and training.

During the hearing which I chaired in the Basic Research Subcommittee of the Committee on Science earlier this year, witnesses from the volunteer and paid fire fighting communities testified as to the importance of the USFA and NFA to their efforts. These programs leverage the modest resources available to local fire departments.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1272 provides a 3 percent annual increase in the USFA's FY 1998 and 1999 budgets. This increase is necessary in order to fund a new mission undertaken by the agency in counter terrorism training for emergency first responders, without negatively impacting USFA's traditional missions. The new mission is complementary to the training programs currently run by USFA, and I fully support this effort. Unfortunately, our nation must deal with the reality that terrorism has reached our borders. Because it will be local fire and emergency service personnel who are first on the scene at these horrible events, as was the case in Oklahoma City, it makes sense for USFA to integrate counter terrorism training with their other training programs.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I think it is important to mention that, as we consider H.R. 1272, the first in a series of bills reported by the House Science Committee, this week is National Science & Technology Week. National Science and Technology Week is an informal and public education outreach program of the National Science Foundation, dedicated to expanding participation by all Americans in the fields of science, technology and engineering. Since its inception in 1985, National Science & Technology Week has gradually expanded in scope and impact, involving millions of Americans in national and local events.

As part of this celebration of innovation and intellect in my home state of New Mexico, the Space Center in Alamogordo, provides training workshops for teachers and planning interactive, hands-on science events. The programs are resourceful in assisting in the distribution of education materials, which are is-

sued annually, both in English and Spanish. These packets assist both formal and informal educators and parents in engaging children in innovative, hands-on learning activities geared to science, mathematics and technology.

I encourage the House and Senate to strongly support this outreach program, recognizing the importance of involving all people in the awareness that science, engineering and technology are important in our lives today and crucial to our progress tomorrow. I hope you will join me in celebrating National Science and Technology Week.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. BARCIA for all of their hard work in getting this legislation to the floor today. I support this bill and ask the House for its expeditious enactment.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion offered by gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. SENSENBRENNER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1272, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1272, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

EXTENDING ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF FEBRUARY 12, 1997, THROUGH WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 1997, AS MODIFIED

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the order of the House of February 12, 1997, be extended through Wednesday, May 7, 1997, with the following modification:

After "minority leader" insert: "or a Member designated from the floor by the majority leader or the minority leader at the time of notice pursuant to clause 2(A)(1) of rule IX,".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

SUPPORT H.R. 400 WITHOUT WEAKENING AMENDMENTS

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)